

I CLAIM:

1. A fold flat vehicle seat comprising:

a movable track member slidably engaging a fixed track member and having a seat assembly mounted thereon for longitudinal sliding movement of said movable track member and said seat assembly relative to said fixed track member along a longitudinal axis;

a track lock means operatively interconnected between said movable and fixed track members and movable between a locked configuration whereat said movable track member is precluded from moving longitudinally relative to said fixed track member and a released configuration whereat said movable track member is permitted to move longitudinally relative to said fixed track member;

wherein said seat assembly includes a seat cushion member mounted on said movable track member and a seatback member mounted on said seat cushion member for forward folding about a seatback pivot axis between a substantially upright occupiable design position and a substantially horizontal load supporting position;

a seatback member latch means operatively engaged between said seatback member and said seat cushion member to selectively control said forward folding of said seatback member;

a downwardly and rearwardly sloped ramp means operatively mounted in fixed relation with respect to said fixed track member;

a drive link assembly having a ramp contact member and being operatively mounted on said seatback member for translational engagement of said ramp contact member with said ramp means, such that as said seatback member is forwardly folded about said seatback pivot axis from said upright occupiable design position to said substantially horizontal load supporting position said track lock means moves to said released configuration, and said ramp contact member moves downwardly and rearwardly along said ramp means to thereby cause rearward longitudinal movement of said seat assembly relative to said fixed track member to a predetermined rear longitudinal position.

2. The fold flat vehicle seat of claim 1, wherein said drive link assembly includes a link arm member having an upper end and a lower end, and wherein said link arm member is mounted adjacent said upper end to said seatback member for pivotal movement with respect to said seatback member.

3. The fold flat vehicle seat of claim 2, wherein said link arm member is mounted adjacent said lower end to said seat cushion member for translational movement with respect to said seat cushion member.

4. The fold flat vehicle seat of claim 3, wherein said link arm member is mounted for travel with respect to said seat cushion member, between a raised rest position corresponding to said upright occupiable design position of said seatback member, and a lowered ramp-contact position corresponding to said substantially horizontal load supporting position of said vehicle seat.

5. The fold flat vehicle seat of claim 4, wherein said seatback member has a forwardly tilted easy entry position disposed angularly between said substantially upright occupiable design position and said substantially horizontal load supporting position, whereat said track lock means has moved to its released configuration to permit said longitudinal sliding movement of said movable track member and said seat assembly relative to said fixed track member, and wherein said link arm member is in an intermediate position between said raised rest position and said lowered ramp contact position.

6. The fold flat vehicle seat of claim 5, wherein said drive link assembly includes a rocker arm member having a

captured end and a free end, and wherein said rocker arm member is connected between its captured end and its free end for pivotal movement to said link arm member adjacent said lower end of said link arm member, for travel with said link arm member between a start position and an end position corresponding to said lowermost position of said link arm member, and wherein said ramp contact member is mounted adjacent said captured end of said rocker arm member.

7. The fold flat vehicle seat of claim 6, wherein said ramp means comprises an upwardly and rearwardly facing ramp having an upper forward end and a lower rearward end.

8. The fold flat vehicle seat of claim 7, wherein, when said rocker arm member is in said start position, said ramp contact member is disposed in spaced relation above said upwardly and rearwardly facing ramp member, and wherein said rocker arm member has an initial contact position between said start position and said end position, wherein, in said initial contact position, said ramp contact member initially contacts said upwardly and rearwardly facing ramp member adjacent said upper forward end of said ramp member.

9. The fold flat vehicle seat of claim 8, wherein said rocker arm member is connected to said link arm, as aforesaid, by means of a mounting pin.

10. The fold flat vehicle seat of claim 9, wherein said link arm member includes a longitudinally oriented lost-motion slot disposed adjacent the lower end thereof and having an upper end defining a drive contact surface and a lower end defining a return contact surface, and wherein said mounting pin is slidably engaged within said lost-motion slot for travel between said drive contact surface and said return contact surface.

11. The fold flat vehicle seat of claim 10, wherein said drive contact surface of said lost-motion slot is disposed in spaced relation from said mounting pin when said link arm member is between said raised rest position and said intermediate position, is in contact with said mounting pin when said link arm member is in said intermediate position, and is pushing downwardly on said mounting pin when said link arm member is further moved from said intermediate position to said lowermost position.

12. The fold flat vehicle seat of claim 11, wherein said mounting pin is slidably engaged in a guide slot formed on said seat cushion member.

13. The fold flat vehicle seat of claim 12, wherein said track lock means includes a crank arm pivotally moveable between a locked position corresponding to said locked configuration of

said track lock means and a released position corresponding to said released configuration of said track lock means.

14. The fold flat vehicle seat of claim 13, wherein said rocker arm is pivotally connected adjacent said captured end to said crank arm for movement of said captured end with said crank arm between said locked position of said crank arm and said released position of said crank arm.

15. The fold flat vehicle seat of claim 14, wherein, when said rocker arm member is in said initial contact position, as caused by downward pushing of said link arm member, continued downward pushing of said link arm member caused by forward pivotal folding movement of said seatback member, causes said crank arm to move from its locked position to its released position, thus permitting said movable track member to move longitudinally relative to said fixed track member.

16. The fold flat vehicle seat of claim 15, further comprising a first lever arm pivotally mounted on said movable track member for movement between a releasing position whereat said first lever arm causes said track lock means to move to said released configuration and a locking position whereat said first lever arm permits said track lock means to move to said locked configuration.

17. The fold flat vehicle seat of claim 16, wherein said first lever arm is operable by means of a sheathed cable member operatively connected between said first lever arm, and wherein forward folding movement of said seatback member a threshold distance from said substantially upright occupiable design position toward said substantially horizontal load supporting position causes said first lever arm to move correspondingly from said locking position to said releasing position.

18. The fold flat vehicle seat of claim 17, further comprising a second lever arm pivotally mounted on said movable track member for movement between a hold-open position whereat said second lever arm retains said first lever arm in said locking position and a start position whereat said second lever arm permits said first lever arm to move to said releasing position.

19. The fold flat vehicle seat of claim 6, wherein said ramp contact member comprises a roller mounted for rotation on said rocker arm member adjacent said free end.

20. The fold flat vehicle seat of claim 19, wherein when said rocker arm member is in said end position, said roller is disposed off the end of said upwardly and rearwardly facing ramp member.

21. The fold flat vehicle seat of claim 1, further comprising a biasing means for biasing said seatback member toward said substantially horizontal load supporting position.

22. The fold flat vehicle seat of claim 1, wherein said seatback member latch means is a rotary recliner mechanism.